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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TOKYO 000214

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SUBJECT: A/S CAMPBELL FEBRUARY 2 MEETING WITH VFM YABUNAKA

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Classified By: Ambassador John V. Roos per 1.4 (b/d)

Summary

¶1. (C) During an 80-minute meeting with EAP A/S Campbell February 2 on regional and bilateral issues, Vice Foreign Minister Yabunaka agreed on the need for a continued focus on DPRK denuclearization and cautioned against being distracted by DPRK calls for peace regime discussions; called on the United States and Japan to leverage their alliance to shape China's choices; and welcomed greater U.S. involvement in regional organizations, including the EAS. Yabunaka also agreed with A/S Campbell on the utility of Japan proposing a vice minister-level U.S.-Japan-China trilat, and said that FM Okada had been invited to travel to Burma in May. VFM Yabunaka said he would try to address budget and timing issues involving former American WWII POWs' travel to Japan. He also pledged to look into ways to facilitate contact between left behind parents and their children, in addition to efforts to promote Japan's Hague Convention accession. End Summary.

DPRK

¶2. (C) EAP A/S Kurt Campbell opened his February 2 meeting with Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka by describing the current state of play with the DPRK, including ongoing U.S. efforts to bring North Korea back to the Six Party Talks and the apparent economic impact of UNSCR 1874 implementation. The Assistant Secretary stressed that the United States remained focused on using U.S.-DPRK contacts within Six Party framework to make progress on denuclearization, and that we would not allow the North Koreans to change the focus of discussions from denuclearization to creation of a peace regime. In light of the DPRK's poor harvest last year and economic distortions caused by the North Korean won's revaluation, Pyongyang may need external assistance soon. That said, there are no signs -- including in North-South contacts -- that the North will return to the Six Party Talks anytime soon, A/S Campbell said. Succession issues also remained unclear, he added.

¶3. (C) VFM Yabunaka welcomed continued U.S. adherence to a policy of strategic patience with the DPRK, and said that any calls for peace regime discussions were a "trap." Before any discussions about peace arrangements, the Six Parties needed to fully agree on denuclearization. VFM Yabunaka noted that,

in his January 27 meeting with Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Denisov, his Russian counterpart offered the view that 1874 implementation was hurting the DPRK, and that the resultant lack of certain goods in Pyongyang was even having a negative impact on the Russian Embassy's operations there, "including the embassy's in-house dental clinic." "Things in North Korea seemed to be very chaotic," Yabunaka said.

14. (C) In response to A/S Campbell's question about reported DPJ contacts with the North, Yabunaka acknowledged that there had been some speculative reports, and that any feelers were likely through the Chosen Soren (Association of North Korean Residents in Japan). Responding to Asia DG Akitaka Saiki's query about recent reports of two detained American citizens in North Korea, A/S Campbell provided an update on U.S. actions, including efforts to secure consular access through the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang. Also in response to DG Saiki's question, ASD Gregson said that future efforts in the area of Fullest Possible Accounting of U.S. servicemen lost during the Korean War would have to take place within the context of overall U.S.-DPRK relations to prevent the North from using this humanitarian effort for other goals.

China

15. (C) On U.S.-PRC relations, A/S Campbell noted that Chinese domestic political imperatives not to appear weak in dealing with the United States will likely lead to continued ups and downs in the bilateral relationship. The Chinese reaction to the Taiwan arms package was one manifestation of this, and there will likely another negative reaction to the Dalai Lama's upcoming visit to Washington and senior-level meetings in his capacity as a spiritual leader. Compounding our

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challenges in the months ahead were personnel changes among those handling the bilateral relationship, including Vice Minister He Yafei's transfer to Geneva. In spite of possible difficulties ahead, the United States would seek to work closely with China on climate change, cyber-related matters and Iran, among other issues, A/S Campbell said.

16. (C) VFM Yabunaka noted that the U.S.-Japan relationship is key in helping to shape China's choices, and that the United States and Japan must work closely together to encourage China to pursue "more responsible interactions with the rest of the world." On Iran, Yabunaka recalled again his conversation with Russian First DFM Denisov, who had said that China would likely approve tougher action through a UNSCR, would insist on IAEA involvement, and would prefer diplomatic over military action.

17. (C) The United States did not see Japan's relations with the United States and China as zero sum, A/S Campbell said. In fact, Japan's recently improved relationship with the PRC was positive, and put Japan in a good position to press for a U.S.-Japan-China trilateral meeting. VFM Yabunaka noted that he had discussed this matter with outgoing Chinese Ambassador Cui Tiankai, and Yabunaka agreed with A/S Campbell that it made sense for Japan to press for a vice minister-level trilateral in the summer.

Regional Architecture

18. (C) The United States recognizes that it needs to play a greater role in regional organizations, and to that end will soon begin a dialogue with Southeast Asian partners on possible participation in the East Asian Summit, A/S Campbell continued. For the EAS to be effective, however, it needed to be better choreographed with APEC, and this process will take time, A/S Campbell said. A/S Campbell urged Japan, in discussing regional architecture, to continue to avoid "Asia for the Asians" formulations. VFM Yabunaka welcomed possible U.S. participation in the EAS and noted that recent GOJ

statements on regional architecture have included a strong call for U.S. involvement.

Burma

¶9. (C) A/S Campbell noted that discussions with Burma's senior leadership will not be an easy process, but the United States will continue to press for progress in democratization and human rights, and we are grateful for Japan's support in this area. It remains unclear whether the elections there will be held in the March/April timeframe, or in October. VFM Yabunaka said that FM Okada was invited to visit in May, speculating that the reason for this timing was that the Burmese might be ready to discuss election preparation details.

POWs and International Parent Child Abduction

¶10. (C) A/S Campbell expressed gratitude for Japanese Ambassador Fujisaki's efforts to promote reconciliation between Japan and the some 200 American POWs from the Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor. Significantly, the Japanese Government had agreed as a gesture of reconciliation to bring a number of these veterans to Japan. Unfortunately, timing and budget issues threatened to undermine what could be a great event that would send a positive message about U.S.-Japan relations, A/S Campbell said. He urged the GOJ to seek ways in which to speed up and expand the program to fully leverage its potential. VFM Yabunaka pledged to look into it.

¶11. (C) On the subject of International Parent Child Abductions, A/S Campbell stressed that Congressional, USG and public interest in this issue is very high, and that a continued lack of progress in at least facilitating contact between left behind parents and their children will further worsen perceptions of Japan's willingness to address this urgent humanitarian matter. Ambassador Roos and A/S Campbell urged the GOJ to take steps to meet the needs of left behind parents while working towards acceding to the Hague Convention. Yabunaka promised to seriously examine what

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steps could be taken to actively and publicly deal with the existing cases and the hopes of left behind parents to meet with their children.

Participants

¶12. (SBU) USG Participants:

Ambassador Roos
A/S Campbell
ASD Gregson
DCM Zumwalt
EAP Special Advisor Nirav Patel
EAP/J Director Kevin Maher
OSD Senior Country Director for Japan Suzanne Basalla
Embassy Tokyo Political Deputy Marc Knapper

MOFA Participants:

VFM Mitoji Yabunaka
Foreign Policy Bureau DG Koro Bessho
Asia DG Akitaka Saiki
North America DG Umemoto
Embassy of Japan Political Minister Takeo Akiba
North America 1 Director Tomoyuki Yoshida
Security Treaty Director Funakoshi
North American Deputy Director Hideaki Konayaga
ROOS